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USSR Report

CONSUMER GOODS AND DOMESTIC TRADE

No. 13

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PROBLEMS IN DEVELOPMENT OF PRIVATE PLOTS

Moscow EKONOMICHESKIYE NAUKI in Russian No 2, Feb 81 pp 70-79

[Article by V. Babayeva: "Problems of the Development of the Private Plot System"]

> [Text] "Increase the production of meat, milk, potatoes, vegetables, and fruit . . . on the private plots." — From the draft document "Basic Directions of Economic and Social Development of the USSR for 1981-1985 and the Period until 1990," prepared by the CPSU Central Committee for the 26th party congress.

The draft document of the CPSU Central Committee for the 25th party congress quoted above emphasizes that "during the 1980's the Communist Party will continue consistent implementation of its economic strategy whose greatest goal is a steady rise in the material and cultural standard of living of the people."[1] Development of the private plot system in proper combination with the public sector, which is the determining sector, is expected to play a large part in accomplishing this goal. Expansion of the private plot system and increasing the production of agricultural output by this means is a distinctive characteristic of the contemporary countryside and is even more important because the current level of production of agricultural output in the country still does not fully meet the needs of the population, including the rural population, for farm products, especially livestock products.

Speaking at the October 1980 Plenum of the CPSU Central Committee, Comrade L. I. Brezhnev said: "Following the line of the March 1965 Plenum of the CPSU Central Committee, we laid the foundations of the kind of modern agriculture that we want and we can and must have to fully meet public needs. A great deal of work has been done. The country produces much more agricultural output. The level of per capita consumption is growing. However, we are still having trouble providing the cities and industrial centers with food products such as meat and milk."[2]

The private plot system is expected to play a definite part in overcoming these difficulties and accomplishing the goals of the food program now

being worked out. The draft document of the CPSU Central Committee for the 26th party congress, as quoted above, provided: "Increase the production of meat, milk, potatoes, vegetables, and fruit on the subsidiary farms of enterprises, organizations, and institutions, on private plots, and in the orchard and garden cooperatives of workers and employees; give them aid in acquiring young animals, feed, seed, and fertilizer."[3]

The importance of developing private plots is also linked to their role in the income of rural inhabitants. It is common knowledge that the average monthly wages of kolkhoz and sovkhoz workers are still significantly lower than the wages of persons working in industry. The main way to overcome this difference is continued development of the public sector, raising its technical level, and improving the qualifications and labor productivity of sovkhoz workers and kolkhoz members. At the same time, we cannot overlook the fact that the private plot system is a supplementary source of income that helps even out the material situation of working people in the cities and the countryside and improve the reproduction of labor resources at the kolkhozes and sovkhozes. The private plot system will continue to perform this function in the near future. On the average, income from private plots is 15-20 percent of the income of a rural family, and for kolkhoz families it is about 28 percent.[4] The USSR Constitution guarantees the right of citizens to operate private subsidiary farms. Article 13 of this historic document reads: "Plots of land granted to citizens in the manner established by law may be used for private farming operations (including maintaining livestock and poultry), for orchard and garden farming, and for individual housing construction. Citizens are obligated to use the plots of land granted to them in a rational manner. The state and the kolkhozes give citizens assistance in operating the private plots."

According to figures for 1976, 13.2 million kolkhoz families and 29.6 million families of workers and employees, a total of 42.8 million families, operate private plots. The average planted area for each such private unit is 0.25 hectares (at kolkhozes) and 0.09 hectares (for workers and employees).[5]

The labor invested by kolkhoz members, workers, and employees in their own private plots is socially necessary labor because it creates part of the necessary product of rural working people and meets both personal needs and those of the socialist society. The product created in the private plot system is a part of the country's national food supply.

The proportionate share of the private plot system in all agricultural production is steadily declining. Nonetheless, its share in the total volume of agricultural output remains quite significant. In 1979, for example, the private plot system produced 61 percent of the potatoes, 29 percent of the vegetables, meat, and milk, 34 percent of the eggs, and 19 percent of the wool. Moreover, for a number of important products the absolute volume of production at private plots is not decreasing (see Table 1 below).

The private plot system today produces more meat than in 1940-1975, more milk and eggs than in 1940-1950, and more wool than in 1940-1970. At the

Table 1. Production of Basic Livestock Products by Categories of Farms*

	1940	1950	1960	1965	1970	1975	1979
Meat, slaughter weight, millions of tons							
All Categories of Farms	4.7	4.9	8.7	10.0	12.3	15.0	15.5
Public Sector	1.3	1.6	5.1	6.0	8.0	10.3	10.9
Private Plot System	3.4	3.3	3.6	4.0	4.3	4.7	4.6
Milk, millions of tons							
All Categories of Farms	33.6	35.3	61.7	72.6	83.0	90.8	93.3
Public Sector	7.5	8.9	32.6	43.9	53.2	62.9	66.4
Private Plot System	26.1	26.4	29.1	28.7	29.8	27.8	26.9
Eggs, billions							
All Categories of Farms	12.2	11.7	27.4	29.1	40.7	57.4	65.6
Public Sector	0.7	1.3	5.4	9.5	19.0	34.8	43.9
Private Plot System	11.5	10.4	22.1	19.6	31.7	22.6	21.7
Wool, thousands of tons							
All Categories of Farms	161	180	357	357	419	467	472
Public Sector	98	141	279	284	337	373	381
Private Plot System	63	39	78	73	82	94	91

*"Narodnoye Khozyaystevo SSR v 1979 g." [The USSR National Economy in 1979], Moscow, 1960, p 275.

same time the ratio between the public and private sectors has changed greatly. In 1940 the private plots produced 3.5 times as much milk as the public sector, and in 1950 it was three times as much, but in 1979 the share of the private plots had dropped to 40.2 percent of the production of the public sector. In 1940 the private plots produced 14 times as many eggs as the public sector, and in 1950 it was 13 times as much, but in 1979 the private plots produced barely half of the number of eggs produced in the public sector. Changes in wool production were similar, but less pronounced. Overall this has led to a significant change in the share of the private plot system in total production of agricultural output in the country (see Table 2 below).

Despite the fact that the private plot system has slightly more than three percent of the planted area, more than one-third of the area of orchards and vineyards in the country is concentrated on this land. During the Eighth Five-Year Plan the private plot system produced (in average computation) 30.8 billion rubles of gross output, in the Ninth Five-Year Plan 32 billion, and on the average for 1971-1976 — 30.7 billion rubles; this was 30.7, 28.1, and 25.2 percent respectively of average annual gross output for all categories of farms. All this illustrates that in the last 10-15 years, despite the fairly even volume of gross output, the share of the private plots in total production is declining. The main reason for this trend is that public agricultural production is developing more rapidly than the private plot sector. The rate of development of the private plot system in the 10th Five-Year Plan was even lower than in the Eighth and Ninth five-year plans. Nonetheless, it has a fairly significant share of total production of agricultural output, in particular output from animal husbandry. Thus, whereas the share of the private plots in all agricultural output in the last three years of the five-year plan was 21.8, 20.6, and 18.5 percent respectively, for animal husbandry output the figures were 38.6, 34.4, and 31 percent.

The crop farming and animal husbandry output produced at private plots is the principal source of food products for the rural population. For example, the families of kolkhoz members meet 95 percent of their needs for potatoes from their own private plots, while for vegetables the figure is 74 percent, for milk and milk products 80 percent, and for eggs almost 100 percent.[6] If the private plot system were to lose its economic significance in the production of potatoes, vegetables, milk, meat, and eggs, the public sector would have to meet the needs of both the urban and the rural population for these products. At the present time, however, the scale of production of these products in the public sector does not even meet the needs of the urban population in full. It follows from this that we should not curtail the private plot system, but rather strengthen it and improve its productivity. This means, specifically, that the private plot should be viewed as a constituent part of the overall agricultural system, one that plays an important part in supplying food to the country, in particular meat, milk, vegetables, potatoes, and fruit. In this respect, the figures given in Table 3 below are most interesting.

Table 2. Structure and Growth Rate of Agricultural Production by Categories of Farms*

	Average Annual Production, billions of rubles			Growth Rates			
	1966-1970	1971-1975	1976-1977	1971-1975 as % of 1966-1970	Average per Year	1976-1977 as % of 1971-1975	Average per Year
All Categories of Farms	100.4	113.7	124.2	113.2	2.5	109.0	3.5
Included in above:							
Crop Farming	47.6	51.7	66.7	108.6	1.7	109.7	4.8
Animal Husbandry	52.8	62.0	65.1	117.4	3.2	106.0	2.5
Public Sector	69.6	81.7	91.1	117.4	3.2	111.5	5.6
Included in above:							
Crop Farming	37.2	41.0	46.2	110.2	2.0	113.7	6.6
Animal Husbandry	32.4	40.7	44.9	125.6	4.6	110.3	5.0
Private Plot System	30.8	32.0	30.7	103.2	0.75	95.9	-2.05
Included in above:							
Crop Farming	40.4	10.7	10.5	102.9	0.6	98.1	-1.0
Animal Husbandry	20.4	21.3	20.2	104.4	0.8	94.8	-2.6

* Compiled from "Narodnoye Khozyaystevo SSSR v 1979 g.," op. cit., pp 219-20, 222, 225, 271, 275, 285.

Table 3. State Purchases of the Principal Products of Animal Husbandry in the Public and Private Sectors*

	1940	1950	1960	1965	1970	1975	1978	1979
Livestock and Poultry, live weight, millions of tons								
Public Sector	1.4	1.6	6.8	8.4	11.3	14.6	15.8	15.6
Private Plots	0.8	0.7	1.1	0.9	1.3	2.2	1.2	1.1
Percentage	57.1	43.8	16.2	10.7	11.5	15.1	7.6	7.2
Milk and Milk Products, millions of tons								
Public Sector	4.3	4.8	24.4	37.0	44.2	53.7	57.6	56.0
Private Plots	2.2	3.7	1.9	1.7	1.5	2.6	2.8	3.0
Percentage	51.2	77.1	7.8	4.6	3.4	4.8	4.9	5.1
Eggs, billions								
Public Sector	0.2	0.8	4.1	7.8	16.1	31.1	38.0	39.7
Private Plots	2.5	1.1	2.4	2.7	2.0	2.0	1.3	1.4
Percentage	12.5	137.5	58.5	34.6	12.4	6.4	3.4	3.5
Wool, thousands of tons								
Public Sector	91	116	307	320	380	427	445	449
Private Plots	29	20	51	48	61	84	83	89
Percentage	32.1	17.2	19.5	15.0	16.0	19.7	18.6	20.0

* Compiled from ""Narodnoye Khozyaystvo SSSR v 1979 g," op. cit., p 278

In 1979 the private plot system accounted for 40 percent of market potatoes, 13 percent of vegetables, 10 percent of meat, seven percent of eggs, and five percent of the milk. The kolkhoz market provides 8-8.5 percent of the total volume of commodity turnover for the same range of goods.

The operation of a private subsidiary farming unit still involves many difficulties. Many regions of the country have not established adequate systems to sell young livestock and poultry, feed, fertilizer, chemicals, and necessary implements and labor-saving devices to persons operating private plots. There are problems with acquiring building materials, obtaining credit to begin raising livestock, and so on. Equally difficult problems arise with the sale of output from the private plots; this artificially retards growth in its market index [percent going to market] and the possibility of increasing the production of crop farming and animal husbandry. It is especially difficult to sell fruit and vegetables and a large proportion of them perish, which of course reduces production of these products at private plots.

Great difficulties sometimes arise with the sale of milk and dairy products and livestock and poultry raised on private plots also.

Unfortunately, the instructions on the necessity of creating the conditions required for timely and uninterrupted sale of surplus output raised on private plots, as discussed in the 14 September 1977 decree of the CPSU Central Committee and USSR Council of Ministers entitled "The Private Plots of Kolkhoz Members, Workers, Employees, and other Citizens and Collective Orchard and Garden Farming," have by no means been carried out in all places.[7]

The dissemination of progressive practices in procuring agricultural output in the private plot system, for example the experience of the Estonian SSR with the sale of milk and dairy products, has not been adequately organized.

Establishing favorable conditions nationwide for private plots to sell their output to the state would bring in significant additional resources to solve the food problem. This is illustrated, for example, by the broadened purchases from the population by cooperative organizations of the RSFSR. In 1977-1978 they bought more than 3 billion rubles worth of agricultural output from the population and put it into state resources. In 1977 alone, 3 million tons of potatoes, 380,000 tons of vegetables, 190,000 tons of fruit, 170,000 tons of meat, and 664 million eggs were purchased from the population of the republic.[8]

Concrete measures are being taken today to improve the organization of state purchases of surplus agricultural products from the population and to sell them in the cities and worker communities. The contract is becoming the principal means of strengthening business relations between individual farms and procurement organizations. Contract relations provide the necessary base for organized production and sale of needed output and fuller utilization of existing surplus output in the private plot system. The Board of Directors of Tsentrosoyuz [USSR Central Union of Consumer Societies] has ratified a model contract and procedure for arriving at it.

The basic rights and obligations of both parties are stipulated in it. Cooperative members with the assistance of the executive committees of local Soviets have begun working vigorously to conclude contracts with kolkhoz members, sovkhoz workers, and other employees for the production and sale of various agricultural products to the consumer cooperatives. This work is very active, for example, in Kurskaya, Ryazanskaya, Volgogradskaya, Tambovskaya, and Rostovskaya oblasts, the Tatar ASSR, and Krasnoyarskiy and Stavropol'skiy krays.

In 1978 procurement workers of the RSFSR concluded more than 330,000 contracts with the population to buy a significant quantity of vegetables, fruit, livestock and poultry, rabbits, milk, eggs, and other types of output. This practice unquestionably deserves serious attention and active support. The cooperatives give their partners advance payments and provide them with containers and packing materials in order to create confidence in the operators of private plots that they will sell their output. Products are purchased from all people who have private plots, but preferences given to those who have concluded contracts.

The growth of state purchases of agricultural output from the population testifies to the effectiveness of the contract system. For example, the Bashkir ASSR Union of Consumer Societies in the first quarter of 1978 purchased 882 tons of meat more than in the same period of 1977 thanks to this system, the Stavropol'skiy Kray union purchased 728 tons more, the Rostovskaya Oblast union purchased 665 tons more, the Volgogradskaya Oblast union purchased 675 tons more, and so on.[9]

However, the opportunity to increase state purchases of agricultural products from the private plots is by no means being taken in all places. For example, in 1977 the population of Belgorodskaya Oblast produced 352,000 tons of potatoes and 53,000 tons of vegetables, but state procurement workers bought only 8,300 tons of potatoes (two percent of the gross harvest) and 17 percent of the vegetables, even though surpluses were much greater.[10] This was a result of the low level of organization of state purchases and a small number of receiving-procurement stations. A similar situation exists in many rayons of Yaroslavskaya, Tul'skaya, Gor'kovskaya, and other oblasts of the RSFSR and the other Union republics.

The continuing progress in state purchases of agricultural output demands an expansion and consolidation of the material-technical base of the procurement system. We must establish a network of permanently operating receiving stations in the countryside and increase the number and capacities of fruit and vegetable storage facilities, slaughter houses, fermenting-pickling stations, and refrigeration units. Furthermore, the time has come to spread the practice of those cooperative organizations that are stimulating growth in the production of output at private plots. This is done by increasing the sale of mineral fertilizer, chemicals, appropriate orchard and garden tools, building materials, and other things needed by the rural population.

Improving the organization of state purchases of livestock products deserves special attention. Despite the fact that the volume of state

purchases of meat by cooperatives of the RSFSR in 1979 increased by 28 percent compared to the average annual volume of purchases in the Ninth Five-Year Plan, the reserves are far from exhausted. This is illustrated, to be specific, by the experience of procurement organizations of the Orenburgskaya Oblast Union of Consumer Societies. In 1977 the procurement workers of this oblast visited some 150,000 households, made regular circular trips through populated points, and hauled in meat purchased from remote settlements at the proper time. As a result, in just one year the cooperatives increased the state purchase of meat from the population by 47 percent.[11] The practice of contracting out livestock to the population to be fed on waste food from public catering enterprises and other local feed resources, especially waste products from the food industry, deserves broad dissemination. The experience of the Novosibirskaya, Penzenskaya, Bryanskaya, and other oblast unions of consumer societies illustrates the wisdom and efficiency of this form of increasing meat resources. But only a few oblasts are following this practice. The opportunities to increase meat resources through the development of rabbit and poultry husbandry at private plots are far from being fully used.

The steps taken by the party to increase the number of livestock and poultry kept by the population and use the capacities of the private plots and the land allocated for collective orchards and gardens efficiently will unquestionably have a positive impact on increasing the production of output in the private plot system. This increases the responsibility of procurement organizations for timely purchase of all surplus output produced at these farms.

Despite the relatively small size of the private plots, operating them requires large expenditures of time and labor. Although the public sector has significantly increased the help it gives in working private land, selling the output produced on it, and so on in recent years, a high degree of heavy physical labor continues to be used in the private plot system.

The use of small power equipment is one of the pressing problems which is being solved very slowly. The decree of the CPSU Central Committee and USSR Council of Ministers on the private plot system adopted in September 1977 posed the task of significantly increasing the production of small power equipment suitable for broad use on private plots and in collective orchard and garden farming. However, work on this matter is still unsatisfactory. Speaking at the November 1978 Plenum of the CPSU Central Committee, Comrade L. I. Brezhnev pointed to the need to give greater attention to the requirements of the private plot system. "We have adopted decrees on these questions," Comrade L. I. Brezhnev emphasized, "but they are being carried out slowly."[12] At the same time it is urgently necessary, taking into account the existing structure of demand, to broaden the assortment of individual implements produced by industry, especially small engines, machines, tools, and tractors with sets of essential attachments. Our contemporary machine building industry is entirely capable of organizing mass large-series production of small equipment for both the public and private plot sectors.

At the present time about 300 enterprises of 34 ministries and departments produce and deliver more than 300 varieties of implements and attachments to the trade network for the private plot system. But despite the increase in production, it is still not enough. Furthermore, the orchard and garden tools produced today are designed almost entirely for manual work, do not meet contemporary requirements, and are not as good as the best foreign models. Even the production of shovels (and they are poor shovels) meets only two-thirds of demand according to figures published in the press in 1978.[12] The situation is about the same with rakes, hoes, cultivators, sprinklers, wagons, and the like. The situation is even worse with means of mechanizing labor in the private plot system and with production of the small machinery and equipment necessary to do this. It is true that industry is producing gas and electric pumps, separators, butter churns, and electric shears, although in limited amounts. But the development of many small machines has dragged on for years, in particular motorized cultivators, electric augers, electric drills, and the like. Even the designs of small equipment that have been developed, for example, the hand-operated motorized hay mower and the small Belarus' MTZ-05 tractor with a set of trailer and mounted implements, developed by the designers at the Minsk Tractor Plant, have for various reasons not been put into series production. The result of all this is that the proportion of small power equipment in the private plot system continues to be negligible.

Under current conditions with the severe shortage of small power equipment it is wise to set up collective forms of buying and using such equipment as well as a rental system. These functions could be assumed by domestic service enterprises, the consumer cooperative system, regular stores, and other organizations. The Goskomsel'khoztekhnika system could assume responsibility for organizing offices to rent small equipment. It would also be useful for state plans of national economic development to envision special assignments for selling and renting small equipment, naming specific performing organizations.

Organizing production of the quantities of equipment necessary for the private plots will, of course, be decisive. Progress in this direction will be facilitated by the measures adopted for the 11th and 12th five-year plans to build up the agroindustrial complex, within which the job is "to insure uniform planning and proportional, balanced development of the sectors."[13] It would appear that such proportional, balanced development must include further progress in the private plot system. Steps to develop the private plots are expected "to create a definite social climate in which kolkhoz members and sovkhoz employees will feel that they are performing a useful, state function by raising livestock and poultry at home."[14]

As the party and state have given greater attention to the private plot in recent years, traditional forms of relations between the public sector and the private plots have broadened and new forms of relations are emerging. They permit full use of the potential of private plots to increase the production of both crop farming and, especially, animal husbandry output. At the same time proper conditions are created for intensive use of the labor and tools of rural inhabitants.

In L'vovskaya Oblast, for example, contracts are concluded between kolkhozes and the owners of private plots to raise young cattle and provide help with feed for them. The contract of the livestock owner contains a clause which says that the kolkhoz will buy young animals at a live weight of 40-60 kilograms and leave them at the same household for raising. For this the farm delivers 2-4 quintals of concentrated feeds at cost and supplies the needed amount of coarse feeds. During the feeding out time animal engineering and veterinary services are provided for the animal. The young animals are taken off this program based on a document which gives the age, live weight, and state of nourishment of the animal. Payment for the fattened livestock is made at state purchase prices. In addition, the kolkhoz gives the livestock owner credit for 15 days off on his general work record.[16]

In Odesskaya Oblast experience has been accumulated with raising poultry at private plots on a similar cooperative contract basis.

The draft document of the CPSU Central Committee for the 26th party congress, "Basic Directions of Economic and Social Development of the USSR for 1981-1985 and the Period Until 1990" specially stresses that a fundamental improvement in feed production and meeting the feed needs of public animal husbandry and livestock held as personal property of citizens is an urgent task. [17] As we see here, the problems of supporting the private plot system are considered together with the issues of growth in the public sector.

Cooperation between the public and private plot sectors should be greatly expanded. This is not just because it is one of the important ways to increase the production of agricultural output. We are talking about directly including the private plot and the rural family's work at home among public, state interests. We are saying that the public and private plot sectors cannot be viewed as opposites in a developed socialist society.

The contract form of economic relations is developing not just in our country, but also in the other socialist countries, in particular Hungary.

This can be illustrated by the example of the Peace Cooperative in the Balaton district of Feier. In the animal husbandry sector 45 percent of the meat sold to the state each year, several thousand quintals, comes from the private sector. The annual plan of the cooperative includes the production of output at private plots, and the farm has equal responsibility for fulfillment of this part of the plan and for all the other sections of it. The cooperative puts feed, fertilizer, and equipment at the disposal of the private plots. For example, a cooperative member receives three quintals of grain corn for each hog sold. To stimulate production the cooperative deducts 0.5 forints to the use of the farmers for each forint of profit received from the sale of pork. Cooperative members who keep breeding sows are permitted to feed out 10-20 piglets a year, keep two cows and two calves, keep bees, and raise potatoes. The potatoes are planted and harvested by cooperative machines. The skillful combination of public and private interests has led to an increase in

the growth of production. Each year the members of the cooperative feed out more than 5,000 bacon hogs on private plots.[10] The bulk of the work in taking care of the animals is done by family members — pensioners and dependents.

The private plots of Hungary produce one-third of its agricultural output. The relations between the private plots and the production cooperatives are regulated by decisions of the Hungarian Government and orders of the Ministry of Agriculture. They oblige the production cooperatives to allocate a private plot for each cooperative member actively employed in the public sector and to help him with production and sale of output. The private plot is given support in the form of credit for the purchase of machines, animals, and feed, for construction of livestock quarters, setting up bee hives, and so on. As a result, the private plot system has become an important part of Hungarian agricultural production.

As already noted above, our socialist agriculture, taking advantage of the experience of the fraternal countries in particular, is also searching for new ways to combine the public sector and private plots in the countryside.

The development and implementation of rational plans for development of rural rayons is one example of centralized measures being taken to combine the public and private plot systems. The experience of the Lyuban' Sovkhoz in Vileyskiy Rayon of Minskaya Oblast deserves attention: they have built a model cowshed for the private livestock of sovkhoz workers. It has automatic watering and mechanisms to clean out the inside. The sovkhoz has undertaken to care for the animals and assigned a livestock machine operator to this job. The owners of the cows milk them and assist the sovkhoz operator in turn. Transferring livestock kept on the personal plots to large, modern livestock quarters creates new opportunity for rational use of both the working and free time of the sovkhoz workers, strengthens the unity of interests between agricultural workers and the enterprise, and promotes a general rise in all agricultural production.

The search for new ways to link the private plots efficiently with the public sector and making them widespread in the interest of a general rise in the productive forces of agriculture and an improvement in its efficiency is an important condition for fuller satisfaction of the country's needs for agricultural output and bringing the standard of living of the rural and urban population closer.

FOOTNOTES

1. "Draft of the CPSU Central Committee for the 26th Party Congress. Basic Directions of Economic and Social Development of the USSR for 1981-1985 and the Period until 1990," Moscow, 1980, p 10.

2. Brezhnev, L. I., "Speech at the 21 October 1980 Plenum of the CPSU Central Committee. Decree of the Plenum of the CPSU Central Committee," Moscow, 1980, p 6.

3. "Draft of the CPSU Central Committee for the 26th Party Congress...," op. cit., p 48.

4. See "Narodnoye Khozyaystvo SSR v 1979 g." [The USSR National Economy in 1979], Moscow, 1980, p 227.

5. See EKONOMIKA SEL'SKOGO KHOZYAYSTVA, 1977, No 10, p 88.

6. See "Problemy Preodoleniya Sotsial'no-Ekonomicheskogo Razvitiya Mezhdu Gorodom i Derevney" [Problems of Overcoming the Socioeconomic Development (sic - should be "difference") Between the City and the Countryside], Moscow, 1976, p 218.

7. See "Resheniya Partii i Pravitel'stva po Khozyaystvennym Voprosam" [Decisions of the Party and Government on Economic Issues], Moscow, 1979, Vol 12, pp 104-111.

8. See SEL'SKAYA ZHIZN', 12 May 1978.

9. Ibid.

10. Ibid.

11. Ibid.

12. Brezhnev, L. I., "Speech at the 27 November 1978 Plenum of the CPSU Central Committee. Decree of the Plenum of the CPSU Central Committee," Moscow, 1978, p 11.

13. See PRAVDA, 27 May 1978.

14. "Draft of the CPSU Central Committee for the 26th Party Congress...," op. cit., p 45.

15. Brezhnev, L. I., "Speech at the 27 November 1978 Plenum...," op. cit., p 11.

16. See SEL'SKAYA ZHIZHN', 27 June 1980.

17. "Draft of the CPSU Central Committee for the 26th Party Congress...," op. cit., p 46.

18. See SEL'SKAYA ZHIZHN', 9 July 1980.

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GENERAL REVIEW OF FOOD PROBLEM, PROPOSED FOOD COMMITTEE

Moscow EKONOMICHESKIYE NAUKI in Russian No 2, Feb 81 pp 13-21

[Article by Professor V. Kravtsova, doctor of economics sciences, Moscow Oblast: "The Comprehensive Approach to Solving the Food Problem"]

> [Text] "Create conditions for fuller satisfaction of the needs of all the population for high-quality, varied food products" - from the draft document of the CPSU Central Committee for the 26th party congress, entitled "Basic Directions of Economic and Social Development of the USSR for 1981-1885 and the Period until 1990."

The decision to prepare a food program is one of the important steps taken by our party in recent times to continue raising the standard of living of the Soviet people. "We are speaking," Comrade L. I. Brezhnev said at the October 1980 Plenum of the CPSU Central Committee, "of a program that will join together the issues of development of agriculture and the sectors of industry, procurements, storage, transportation, and processing of agricultural output which serve agriculture and the questions of development of the food industry and food trade. This agroindustrial food complex should be planned, financed, and managed as a single unit for good final results."[1] The development of this type of program is a direct embodiment of the requirements of the basic economic law of socialism in the practical work of a developed socialist society. Guided by these requirements and the developmental goals inherent in socialism, the CPSU and Soviet Government devote constant attention to the food problem. Suffice it to say that the first economic plan of the Land of Soviets was the food plan for 1921-1922. The problems at that time were overcoming famine and eliminating class inequality in food consumption. Today we are dealing with a fundamentally different phase in the state of the food problem and ways to solve it. Our developed socialist society has already attained the standards of personal consumption by calorie content and established stable food resources. Production, distribution, and exchange of food are developing in a planned and progressive manner.

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[1] Brezhnev, L. I., "Speech at the Plenum of the CPSU Central Committee on 22 October 1980. Decree of the Plenum of the CPSU Central Committee," Moscow, 1980, p 7.

The 25th CPSU Congress adopted an elaborate system of steps toward further development of the food sector. According to this system of measures food production, retail trade, and public catering developed faster than population growth and agroindustrial associations were formed at an intensive rate. Between 1976 and 1979 the population increased 3.8 percent while gross agricultural output rose nine percent, including six percent for animal husbandry. The total volume of output of the food industry rose seven percent in these years, which included four percent for meat and nine percent for dairy products. As a result the per capita consumption of meat and meat products rose two kilograms, consumption of milk and dairy products rose three kilograms, average consumption of eggs increased 24, and consumption of vegetables and melons increased nine kilograms.[2] This led to a lessening of differences between accepted scientific norms of consumption and the actual level.

In the period between the 25th and 26th congresses of the CPSU a new approach to solving the food problem and managing the food complex was outlined and a harmonious conception of the approach to this complex as a single whole unit developing on the basis of a specially developed food program took shape. The Marxist-Leninist scientific interpretation of the essential features and current state of the food problem and ways to solve it, viewing the problem as a general group of problems of production, distribution, exchange, and organization of personal consumption of food, was formulated by Comrade L. I. Brezhnev in his reports at the 16th Congress of Trade Unions and the ceremony in honor of the 60th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution.[3] The three main problems that can justifiably be singled out from the broad range of issues encompassed by this problem are: (1) creating optimal, stable food resources; (2) balancing the volume and structure of food resources with population size; (3) achieving physiologically sound equality in personal consumption of food by different population groups and making this consumption rational. These questions have not been fully solved yet, and this unquestionably makes preparation of the food program more timely.

In the most general form the content of the food problem has always been conditioned on the level of development of productive forces and nature of production relationships, and it is a question in all socioeconomic systems. A number of foreign sociologists and economists explain that the situation is worse today because of the discrepancy between the growth rates of population and food resources, inequality in international trade, and the inefficiency of food aid. This explanation, for one thing, does not go past the surface of phenomena (which, incidentally, is traditional for bourgeois theories), and in the second place, can be applied only to the developing countries in general, even considering this circumstance. But in the developed capitalist countries, despite the relatively high level of food production per capita, there is also a food problem. It is

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[2] Calculated from figures in "Narodnoye Khozyaystvo SSSR v 1979 g." [The USSR National Economy in 1979], Moscow, 1980, pp 7, 141, 432.

[3] See L. I. Brezhnev, "Leninskim Kursom" [By a Leninist Course], Moscow, 1978, Vol 6, pp 326, 327, 328, 585.

manifested in illnesses caused by diet deficiencies in some and excesses in others; in the destruction and degradation (chemical treatment) of food; in regulation of the production of agricultural output to reduce its level and achieve conservation goals; in hunger among the poor classes.

In the socialist countries the food problem cannot be in any way related to class antagonism, because there are no classes. But socialism does not preclude non-antagonistic contradictions among production, distribution, exchange, and personal consumption. Planned solutions to these contradictions rely on the objective laws of socialism, above all its basic economic law, and aim at fully achieving optimal physiological norms of consumption. In our society this means the social standard of personal food consumption.

The food program must begin from the idea that it is oriented to solve a problem which is multisectorial and multifaceted. Under conditions of socialism it has several aspects: socioeconomic, demographic, technical, technological, biomedical, and educational. One of the conditions for stepping up work to solve this problem in the current phase is activating scientific research in which the problem is treated as an aggregate of elements that differ in form and content. We still find many scientific and practical workers taking a one-sided view of the food problem, from the resource standpoint only. But scientific work and decisions cannot bypass such aspects of the problems, interrelated with it, as increasing longevity, improving people's health, raising the level of labor productivity, and better use of non-working time. The food problem is viewed too narrowly when it is linked only to the restoration of existing labor and reproduction of new labor. In reality, the question should be reproduction of the population in general, with due regard for the many aspects of this process. Needless to say, this includes the social aspects.

The current phase of development of our country, in particular the time between the 25th and 26th CPSU congresses, is seeing social factors exert a steadily growing influence on the economy. The objective process of progressively greater intertwining of social and economic factors in development of socialist production necessitates the interpretation of criteria of economic growth from the standpoint of socioeconomic optimality. This, in turn, requires an appropriate theoretical-methodological approach to solving the food problem.

The questions of the relationship between the biological and social aspects of personal food consumption are studied little today, and in very general form. The underdevelopment of a number of general methodological questions related to this problem leads to superficial treatment of goals and tasks in the areas of food production, distribution, exchange, and organization of personal consumption and to the lack of a comprehensive approach to the problem when deciding its many issues that require systematic control. Thus, economists, demographers, and sociologists very seldom consider the importance of rational diet for the health of the people and raising labor productivity. The importance of organizing personal food consumption on the basis of social standards as the principal goal of solving this problem is overlooked.

The draft document of the CPSU Central Committee for the 26th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, entitled "Basic Directions of Economic and Social Development of the USSR for 1981-1985 and the Period Until 1990," states as follows: "Carry out a system of measures to increase the length of human life and work activity, and strengthen the health of the population...increase the free time of the working people through the development of public services and lightening work in the home.

"Raise the organization of public labor and of all production to a higher level; concentrate personnel and resources on solving the fundamental national economic problems, insure realization of target comprehensive programs for the most important socioeconomic programs in stages, above all the food program."[4]

The lack of essential comprehensiveness is felt particularly on the purely practical level. It is the precondition to the occasional adoption of measures that are inadequately coordinated, some being directed entirely at the development of production, others only at improving commodity circulation, while still others concern nothing but the organization of personal consumption. Many scientific studies of aspects of the food problem are equally uncoordinated. There is no need to demonstrate that this approach to the work cannot be adequately effective, especially because it falls far short of considering all possible consequences of proposed solutions.

The recently adopted decision of the Politburo of the CPSU Central Committee on preparation of a food program which will concentrate the issues of development of agriculture and the sectors that serve it in industry, procurements, storage, transportation, and processing of agricultural output and the issues of development of the food industry and food trade is noteworthy in particular because it gives scientists and practical workers a firm orientation to comprehensive development of the theoretical and practical aspects of the problem. It is also very important in this connection that a continuous relationship is to be maintained between steps to solve the food problem and all other aspects of the uniform plan for economic and social development of the country. In his speech at the October 1980 Plenum of the CPSU Central Committee, Comrade L. I. Brezhnev pointed out: "The food program must be prepared so that it will become an organic part of the 11th Five-Year Plan."[5] The target program approach to the food problem, as outlined at the October 1980 Plenum of the CPSU Central Committee, makes it possible: to insure correct decisions, from a national economic standpoint, when selecting directions of development of all spheres of the food complex; to construct a system of indicators and assignments of the 11th Five-Year Plan by sectors considering the need to move toward the ultimate goal of the program — organizing personal

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[4] "Draft Document of the CPSU Central Committee for the 26th Party Congress. Basic Directions of Economic and Social Development of the USSR National Economy in 1981-1985 and the Period Until 1990," Moscow, 1980, pp 11-12.

[5] Brezhnev, L. I., "Speech..., op. cit.," p 7.

food consumption on the basis of a physiologically substantiated standard; to point out specific ways to achieve this ultimate goal; to work out a detailed structure of the food problem by spheres of the national economy; to define expected final results; to outline ways to solve the food problem and work out a system of measures that insures accomplishment of the program goal in an integrated system of scientific-technical, economic, social, and organizational-management measures.

When solving the food problem, which is an intersectorial problem, it is especially important to use the specific features and advantages of the target program approach. This approach insures a non-departmental point of view toward the preparation of plans and makes it possible to take account of the full aggregate of interrelationships which are not considered with the sectorial approach. The target program method of planned management of the food problem presupposes the adoption of consistent decisions and conducting work in all of the principal areas: determination of goals — introduction in personal consumption of a social standard based on differentiated diets; development of interrelated measures to achieve this goal at definite times, including provision of food resources (agricultural and food production, food import); improving the system of distribution, exchange, and organization of personal food consumption to insure attaining one of the main goals of socialist production — optimal satisfaction of the food needs of the population. Development of the food program begins with an evaluation of ultimate social demand for food on the basis of differentiated diets and then a determination of the most effective organizational measures and means of achieving them, based on consideration of the prospects of scientific-technical progress. The target program method of eliminating contradictions within the food complex helps coordinate goals with methods of achieving them and the resources required. This technique makes it possible to break the main goal down into stages, and to differentiate each of the components of the food problem into particular, local aspects.

The transition to long-term planning of development of the food complex based on a target food program and integrated organizational structuring of this complex have, as already observed, a number of socioeconomic prerequisites.

In the first place, attaining the highest goal of the Soviet State, which the Constitution of the USSR establishes to be building a classless communist society, presupposes further improvement in socialist social relations and their transformation into communist relations. The latter cannot take shape without a transition (accomplished by stages) to the principle of equality in food consumption and more intensive development of a system where food is provided free or on a privileged basis.

In the second place, the mature socialist society built in our country has attained a high level of personal consumption which makes it possible to pose the task of raising the quality of consumption to the level of social standards.

In the third place, the necessary material-technical prerequisites for solving this problem exist under conditions of contemporary

scientific-technical progress where it is used in conformity with the principles of socialism.

In the fourth place, the significance of such social factors as longevity, state of health, and work capability of the population in the current phase of our development is increasing in all respects, including the economic aspect, and all these factors are greatly influenced by a rational diet.

In the fifth place, the organic combination of scientific-technical advances and the advantages of the socialist system which is characteristic of developed socialism permits the use of new ways of economic organization to reach an optimal solution of the food problem and improve management of the food complex.

At the present time many ministries and departments are involved in the production, distribution, exchange, and organization of personal consumption of food, and adequate coordination has not been achieved among them. As a result, there are significant losses in quantity and quality as food moves from production to consumption. Moreover, the needs of the rational diet are taken into account only in the stage of planning the volume of production of raw material and food. The extent of lack of coordination in management of the food complex today and the losses that are possible as a consequence can be judged by the fact that more than 50 ministries and departments in the country are involved with organizing food consumption alone. Coordination of the multisectorial activity of the food complex is not optimal in the stage of planning or the stage of practical implementation. The plan for development of the national economy does not have a composite section on food production, distribution, exchange, and organization of personal consumption. There are balance calculations that are expected to match the total level of trade turnover with money incomes of the population, indicators of growth in the industrial output of all group B sectors, and planned calculations of the production of output from the food, meat-dairy, fishing, and milling-groats industries. But there is no uniform methodology for planning, organizing, and coordinating production and selling food products. As Comrade L. I. Brezhnev has pointed out many times, the national economic food complex needs to be more precisely organized.

It seems to us that in the current phase of improving management it would be wise, taking into account the experience of the CEMA countries, to form a USSR committee and Union Republic committees on food and diet who could concentrate the functions of administrative regulation and coordination of food production, distribution, exchange, and organization of personal consumption and scientific research on the food problem based on a target program. The state committee for food and diet would undertake management of the USSR food complex, in particular the activities of the ministries of Agriculture, Procurements, Food Industry, Meat-Dairy Industry, Fishing Industry, and Trade, and of Tsentrosoyuz [USSR Central Union of Consumer Societies] on the basis of a target food program. In conformity with its range of authority this committee could also direct certain facets of the activities of the ministries of Health and Education. A state committee

for food and diet could develop and ratify directives, instructions, norms, and standards for the food sphere of the economy and resolve other general problems of food and diet resources. A planning and scientific center operating within the framework of this committee could develop current, medium-term, and long-term plans of development, programs for solving the problems of the food complex, and differentiated diets based on physiological norms of consumption — achieving them would be the goal of the work of the complex. In addition the center could calculate the food requirement for the country as a whole and in territorial breakdown (on the basis of diets) and identify sources of food resources. This same center could prepare volume and structural assignments for agriculture for production of food and raw materials to be produced within the country and state procurement plans by regions, work out plan assignments for sectors of the food industry with special identification of indicators for the production of food that requires minimal processing, and establish plans for commodity turnover in the retail trade network and public catering.

The functions of the state committee for food and diet could also include coordinating the activities of agricultural food production, the subsectors of the food industry, and the agencies that carry on distribution, exchange, and organization of personal consumption. In addition to other problems the committee could handle such matters as managing commodity food traffic, shaping and storing food resources on a territorial basis, supplying the retail network, public catering, and non-market consumers, and organizing retail food trade and public catering.

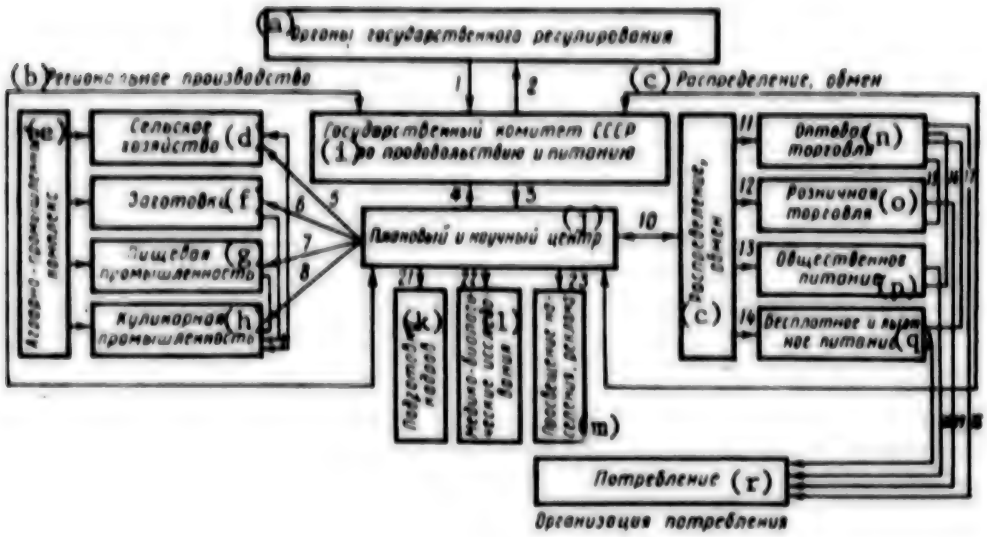
Because the subsectors of the food industry must, for objective reasons, be specialized in the production of a definite range of items and personal consumption in the future will have to be prepared for a transition to food rations, it appears essential to set up production enterprises that shape daily food rations. They could be specialized combines, of either the food industry or public catering, that produce ready-to-eat dishes.

Finally, in our opinion the state committee for food and diet should be given responsibility for training personnel for all the many occupations in the food complex, educating the public with respect to rational diet, and publicizing rational diet practices.

Let us represent the activities of the agency to manage the food complex, in a diagram (see below). In the figure numbers are used to designate the functions performed.

The growth in the scale of food production and the increasing complexity of the economic links that are taking shape make it essential not only to search for new methods of planned management of the country's food complex but also to insure closer coordination of theory and practice and more thorough scientific development of the problems of an integrated food complex, including the questions of ways and means of solving these problems on the basis of a target food program. While discussing the immediate task of scientific work and support of the food program we must point out that there are profound disproportions today between accumulated

Figure. Organization of Management of the Food Complex (Structure, Diagram of Relationships)



Key:
(a) State Regulatory Agencies;
(b) Regional Production;
(c) Distribution, exchange;
(d) Agriculture;
(e) Agroindustrial Complex;
(f) Procurements;
(g) Food Industry;
(h) Culinary Industry;
(i) USSR State Committee for Food and Diet;
(j) Planning and Science Center;
(k) Personnel Training;
(l) Biomedical Research;
(m) Public Education, publicity;
(n) Wholesale Trade;
(o) Retail Trade;
(p) Public Catering;
(q) Free and Preferential Food Supply;
(r) Consumption, organization of consumption

(1) Preparation of drafts of state laws, development of directives, ratification of instructions, standards, norms, and future plans and programs for general problems of diet and food;

(2) Work to insure a correct combination of current and future plans of the complex;

(3) Shaping plans for food production, distribution, exchange, and organization of personal consumption; study, development, and adjustment of differentiated food rations;

(4) Development of planning and scientific materials on food production, distribution, exchange, and consumption;

(5) Delivery of plan assignments for production of agricultural output;

[Key continued next page]

[Key continued]

(6) Delivery of plan assignments for state purchases of raw materials and food;

(7) Delivery of plan assignments for production of output by subsectors of the food industry;

(8) Delivery of plan assignments for production of daily food rations;

(9) Pro uction of food rations;

(10) Organization of direct and return links with producers of ready-to-eat products;

(11) Wholesale trade;

(12) Retail food trade;

(13) Organization of paid forms of public catering;

(14) Organization of free and preferential forms of catering;

(15) Commodity traffic between wholesale and retail trade;

(16) Commodity traffic between wholesale trade and public catering;

(17) Supply for the organization of free and preferential catering;

(18-19-20) Organization of consumption;

(21) Training personnel for the entire complex;

(22) Biomedical research and its introduction;

(23) Public education on questions of rational diet practices; publicizing rational diet practices.

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scientific-technical advances and the level of their practical utilization. These disproportions must be eliminated as quickly as possible, bearing in mind of course that a certain scientific-technical backlog must always exist. At the same time, there is definitely a need to continue further scientific research on the food problem and to make it more efficient.

This need is related, in particular, to the organization of target program developmental work that does not fit within the scope of particular spheres of the food complex. For example, at the present time there is unquestionably a need for scientific development of a system to evaluate the quality of the public diet and make practical recommendations on a balanced diet. This problem is related to the structure of production in agriculture and the food industry, to international and domestic trade (wholesale

and retail), and to public catering and public health. Essential tasks here are: comprehensive studies on such particular questions as the nutritional value of food output produced in terms of calorie, protein, fat, microelement, and vitamin composition; specific regional features of the diet and development of coefficients of the composition of microelements and vitamins for different regions of the country; identification of coefficients of preservation of vitamins and microelements with different methods of heat treatment; creating uniform nationwide standards for the content of all components in final food products; determining daily food rations with due regard for these coefficients; developing standards for food supplements to meals to bring their content to physiological standards; developing, when necessary, new recipes for meals to make them fully meet the current requirements of dietary physiology.

It is essential to develop daily food rations (menus) for the population which are differentiated by the same characteristics as physiological consumption norms. This should be done on the basis of studies such as those described above. Ingredients must be balanced by volume and calorie, protein, fat, mineral, and vitamin composition. It is especially important that food rations take into account the microelement and vitamin content of products in the particular economic-geographic region. The level of contamination of food and water by harmful additives must also be taken into account and steps identified to eliminate these problems.

The development and implementation of a food program to organize personal consumption on the basis of a social standard will provide society with numerous advantages. We will note here just two important factors. In the first place, it will be possible to improve the very tight situation today with labor resources by improving preservation of ability to work and extending the time during which people take part in public labor. In the second place, society will be able to prevent the occurrence of illnesses caused by an unbalanced diet. This means, in turn, a reduction in expenditures for medical treatment, an increase in the annual fund of working time, and an increase in population longevity.

Significant difficulties will have to be overcome in organizing scientific research on components of the food problem. These studies are disorganized today and carried on at small sectorial institutes and laboratories. For example, all the scientific research institutes and their branches, bureaus, and laboratories in the Union republics are engaged in studying particular issues of the food problem to one extent or another. Each of these scientific institutions is working on some part of the problem, for example the market for a particular type of food, the structure of full meals in category No 3 dining halls, the food value of certain dishes, and so on. In those cases where the particular type of research is assigned to specialized institutions a gap is created between the stages of the scientific research process which is aggravated by lack of institutional coordination. Given such a situation we can understand why the potential of scientific-technical advances is not at all adequately used.

It should be noted that the spheres of the food complex have a great problem with availability of scientific personnel. But the problem of incorporating

scientific advances is in large part a matter of personnel. To solve it we need specialists who not only have scientific-technical or production knowledge, but also are able to evaluate the importance of new scientific advances realistically and organize practical utilization of them.

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RELATION OF INSPECTION TO PRODUCT POLICY EXAMINED

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[Article by M. Amigud, sector head of the central project planning, design and process engineering bureau Sistemproyekt of the Ministry of Machinebuilding for Light and Food Industry and Household Appliances]

[Text] At the October (1980) Plenum of the CPSU Central Committee Comrade Leonid Il'ich Brezhnev observed: "In just the current 5-year period the output of industries in Group B will increase 40 billion rubles. But the low quality of many products is still not rising."

A decisive turnaround in raising the quality of the consumer goods manufactured requires during the 11th Five-Year Plan not only improved organization of production and production technology, but also a radical improvement in regulation of the processes of inspection when goods are shipped and received.

First of all we should say that the performance of a number of industrial enterprises in 1980 indicates that adherence to sections of contracts devoted to conditions concerning product quality does not always ensure its necessary level by any means. The number of cases in which goods are manufactured with significant departures from standards and engineering specifications is greatly unwarranted.

The quality of products and goods naturally depends first on the level of technical refinement of the implements and means of labor applied and used in the production process. But the effectiveness of the system of quality control at every enterprise, in the association, in the industry and in the national economy as a whole also has a role in this area that is not by any means the least important. Along with continuous technical improvement of production and improvement of the qualifications of the work force, the functioning system of quality inspection or monitoring has an important preventive and disciplining role in this area.

At enterprises of the country's light industry there are 140,000 inspectors--about 5 percent of the entire work force (in the country's national economy they total about 1 million)--who are monitoring adherence to technical discipline and to requirements concerning quality. Yet, as shown by checks made by agencies of Gosstandart [State Committee of Standards], 90 percent of the enterprises surveyed were producing some products which deviated from standards.* At the head plant of

* "Are Quality Filters Reliable?" EKO, No 6, 1980, p 150.

the Donetsk association Elektrobytmash the OTK [technical inspection division] has a staff of 170 (6 percent of the entire number of workers and employees), and yet one "Donbass" refrigerator out of 10 is manufactured with defects discovered within the warranty period. What do these statistics indicate?

It is no secret that shortcomings are inherent in quality monitoring authorities within any sector manifested in the inevitably narrowly departmental approach they take to monitoring matters.

It is well known that the quality of goods which the OTK has certified as "good" for sale is checked by the customer (when he obtains them) and also by the interdepartmental inspection authorities of Gosstandart, Goskomsel'khoztekhnika [State Committee for Supply of Production Equipment for Agriculture], trade ministries, etc. In 1979 there were 80 commissions "filtering" the products of the Donbass garment production association. In 1 year 1,200 inspection checks of product quality were made at 15 enterprises of the Ukrainian Garment Industry. Alas, this had no particular effect toward improvement of product quality. Experts in the distribution sector are able to check only about 10 percent of the items arriving for sale. In the Ukraine, for example, only 9 percent of footwear passed through the hands of inspectors outside the production sphere in 1979.

Most goods reach consumers through wholesale depots. It is quite natural that these organizations should be interested in their high quality and reliability. But the personnel of the depots can directly monitor the quality of goods only when the item is first shipped to the warehouses of these depots, which is not always the case by any means. A number of special delivery conditions applying to specific commodities authorize the appropriate wholesale organizations of trade ministries of union republics to make inspection checks of the quality of goods readied for shipment (release for distribution) at industrial enterprises located in the area served by the depots as well as the procedure and intervals of such checks (Point 44 of the Regulation on Commodity Deliveries). But such checks are made only sporadically, and moreover this authority has not been set forth in the special delivery conditions pertaining to many commodities.

There is something else that we need to discuss. Last year workers of garment enterprises in the Ukraine made 4,350 official trips and spent 125,000 rubles to participate in acceptance of goods with respect to quality. According to certain calculations, it costs the state 15 million rubles every year just for checks at garment enterprises, to file claims, to make reimbursements, and to make return visits for inspection.*

What is the solution? It is quite obvious that it is much simpler to ascertain shortcomings in quality and halt shipment of rejected goods to consumers if representatives of wholesale depots or of customers conduct the acceptance examination of goods at the industrial plant itself "as the goods are leaving."

The organization of product quality inspection we propose would have a number of advantages. It would make it possible to abandon the quality inspection of goods in many stages within the production sphere and outside it and especially the "inspectors of inspectors."

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* Op. cit., p 155.

Enterprises of light industry and wholesale depots of Ukrainian SSR have a certain experience in inspecting (spot checks) of commodity quality within the production shop itself. For instance, in order to enhance the accountability of industrial enterprises for manufacturing good-quality knitwear the Ukrainian Republic Wholesale and Retail Firm for the Clothing Trade and Ukrtrikotazhprom [knitwear industry component] of the Ukrainian Ministry of Light Industry conducted an experiment at 10 manufacturing enterprises in which they set up permanent inspection of goods produced as to conformity to GOST [state standard] 15.602.73 "Samples (Standards) of Products of Light Industry." The inspection was conducted by specialists in merchandise quality of the oblast firms "Odezhda" [Clothing].

But recently (in May 1980) this effort was terminated. The reason? A letter of the Ukrainian Republic Wholesale and Retail Firm for the Clothing Trade dated 18 April 1980 informed the departments of the firm that further improvement and extension of the new inspection procedure was impossible "because of the absence of a legal foundation." It was accordingly proposed that the inspection efforts at the enterprises be discontinued. And that was done even though GOST requirements were entirely applied to production as a result of the effort that was made, the external appearance of the articles was improved, and there was a sharp reduction in delivery of goods to organizations in the distribution sphere which had not been ordered.

The firm's officials saw this "absence of a legal foundation" mainly in the fact that the penalties cannot be exacted from knitwear factories for manufacturing products with defects detected by merchandise specialists in warehouses and in shops of enterprises, since efforts of this kind cannot be regarded as inspection checks envisaged by the special conditions. And yet the picture is different in the footwear production association located in the same city. There, as indeed with their neighbors in the knitwear industry, the quality of products produced is evaluated daily by mutual agreement by the acceptance officer of the wholesale depot. The results of the acceptance are noted in the log at the end of the shift and are confirmed by signatures of the merchandise specialists of the depot, the representative of the OTK and the chief of the shop of the association's main factory. At the end of the month the overall results of acceptance are set forth in a joint document, and footwear not meeting the quality standards is sent to the appropriate shop for correction of the defects.

What are the results of introducing consumer evaluation as part of a system of quality control of goods in the stage of their production?

This kind of inspection has unquestionably made it possible to objectify evaluation of the quality of products produced. For example, in the Donetsk Footwear Production Association organizations from the distribution sphere checked 737,500 pairs of footwear, including 449,800 pairs on the line, and the grade category was reduced on 15,700 pairs. Returns of footwear not meeting quality requirements amounted to 34,100 pairs for the year, and of these 28,600 pairs were returned from warehouses to the assembly line to be redone.

What is the attitude of the manufacturers toward the new organization of quality inspection?

Realizing that in and of themselves the experiments conducted in recent years are justified, the manufacturers nevertheless feel that this acceptance procedure is in need of improvement. For example, the suppliers argue with good reason, concentration of the entire inspection effort at factory warehouses in the hands of representatives of the wholesale component of the distribution sphere should result in a certain responsibility on the part of trade authorities for certification awarded to products which have been checked. At present, of course, they do not bear this accountability: goods declared to be of good quality at the enterprise may be rejected after an additional check at wholesale depots or in stores. Last year a large lot of footwear was delivered from the head factory of the association to a warehouse of the wholesale depot and there was rejected. Disturbed by what had happened, officials of the association's OTK, headed by the general director, went there. And here the merchandise experts confronted a confused situation--on all the products the stamp of the manufacturer's OTK was accompanied by the stamp of the depot, which also certified the suitability of the footwear. An additional check showed that the complaints concerning the quality of this lot of footwear were unfounded.

It needs to be said that the motivation of organizations in the distribution sphere to reject goods increases greatly when the demand for the commodity drops. The commercial firm "Obuv'" [Footwear] concluded an agreement for the sale of women's summer sandals to the "Kristall" [Crystal] Department Store in Kramatorsk. However, the firm held back the products more than 10 months and delivered them to the consignee only in October, when the demand for sandals had fallen off greatly. The department store, reluctant to burden itself with large above-allowance remainders, returned the footwear to the production association, having first filled out what later was found to be an unjustified document rejecting them. Even though this footwear had been previously accepted by the firm's merchandise specialist, and even though it was not the fault of the manufacturers that the goods were no longer in demand, they would have had to bear the liability for the inaction of the commercial organization if the true picture of what happened had not been ascertained. It is evident that thought should be given to ways of eliminating the bias from assessment of the quality of goods made by representatives of organizations in the distribution sphere, specifically by establishing personal material liability for an assessment which is not objective.

Footwear manufacturers also object to the demands of organizations in the distribution sphere that they pay a penalty of 20 percent and not 2 percent of the value of the goods for rejection of products when the defects are detected in production shops. The manufacturers rightly feel that as a rule the deficiencies in product quality can be corrected and often the footwear is repaired on the spot, before the eyes of the merchandise specialist.

It would seem that appropriate clarifications of the USSR State Arbitration Commission are needed on these matters. After all, the new method of strengthening the consumer's role in assessing the quality of goods is being applied more and more widely. For instance, recently Mosmebel'torg, in order to improve the quality of goods, adopted a decision to send a permanent representative to a furniture combine in order to check conformity of products to GOST and to monitor their timely shipment to customers.

It should not be assumed that if the conduct of inspections of goods for quality at industrial enterprises is made the responsibility of representatives of wholesale depots this will completely eliminate the need for the OTK's existence. Inspection for product quality is a task both of manufacturers and also of organizations in the distribution sphere.

In our view there can be no doubt that enlarging the rights of customers concerning quality inspection will not tend to increase the total number of inspectors. The customer's inspection of the goods in the final operations before their preparation for shipment (release for distribution) and at the moment of shipment will make it possible to considerably reduce the number of personnel employed in acceptance of goods for quality in the stores themselves. Enterprises also become able to reduce the staff size of the OTK, concentrating inspection for quality at points between phases of manufacturing.

And several other arguments on behalf of granting the wholesale trade component the right to actively monitor the quality of goods in advance. At enterprises this job can be done by qualified specialists--merchandise experts concerned with acceptance of products of that kind. In the retail trade network, especially in small stores, acceptance, which is based on a spot check, is done by sales personnel who do not have the specialized knowledge in the field of quality inspection, nor familiarity with standards and technical specifications, and they lack inspection equipment and measuring instruments and other indispensable equipment.

Inspection of goods for quality by representatives of the wholesale depot in the manufacturer's warehouse will also serve as an effective means of preventing cases of flagrant violation of planning and financial discipline, upward distortion of report data in particular.

So, we can make the following observation: the granting to wholesale trade depots (on the basis of the manufacturer's location) the authority for acceptance and assessment of the quality of goods within manufacturing enterprises will make the inspection process more orderly, will prevent cases of low-quality goods being manufactured and delivered into the distribution sphere, will ultimately improve the efficiency of performance of manufacturing plants and will reduce costs incurred in detecting and eliminating the consequences of goods rejected in the retail trade network.

It is indispensable, of course, that the enterprises themselves see to correction of the shortcomings which have been detected and unfailingly institute the proceedings established by law to ascertain the material and other forms of accountability of persons to blame for manufacturing goods of poor quality.

It is important that the experience with this kind of inspection be summarized with the help of legal experts so that enterprises and wholesale depots can make the relevant recommendations to superior organizations on the basis of those summaries.

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TIGHTER CONTROLS NEEDED ON AZERBAIJAN KOLKHOZ MARKETS

Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 23 Jan 81 p 2

[Article by L. Tairov, Baku: "A Model Organization for Markets"]

[Text] Everything is available in the kolkhoz markets of Baku, Sumgait, Kirovabad and other cities in the republic. However, the mood of the consumer frequently is spoiled when he learns what he must pay for a kilogram of certain gifts from the abundant Azerbaijan soil. The prices for market produce are much higher than those in state stores. It is not solely a matter of quality of products, the workers of the newspaper VYSHKA and press activists have concluded. The raids they have conducted have shown that speculators who have purchased fruit and vegetables from farmers feel very free in the markets of Azerbaijan. Sometimes kolkhoz farmers are met at the door of the market not by representatives of its administration but by all kinds of advocates of easy profits. They purchase a farmer's total produce cheaply and then set their own very high prices. There are many other shortcomings in the trade organization of markets.

They were discussed in articles entitled, "And Golden Pears are Growing," and "In the Dirty Water." Recently the editors sponsored a round-table discussion in which the representatives of ministries, departments and other republic organizations participated. Editorials and letters to the editors were discussed. The topic of conversation was the development of effective measures to bring order to the market. An article about the meeting published in VYSHKA attracted the attention of the public.

The participants of the conference proposed, for example, that kolkhoz farmers and sovkhoz workers who must sell their surplus at the market be issued special certificates by the enterprise confirming that they were actually released from work to go to the market. The market administration must direct some attention at them and help them in a business-like manner. The participants of the discussion noted that this measure would enable honest rural workers to sell their products more quickly and at the same time to limit the infiltration of the market with second-hand dealers.

It was pointed out that the utilization of such certificates would strengthen labor discipline in enterprises. For example, the representative of MVD [Ministry of Internal Affairs] reported that an investigation conducted by the ministry in only six Baku markets during the most intensive agricultural period turned up over 600

trading residents of the relatively small Sabirabadskiy Rayon. For this reason, during harvesting operations when each hour is dear the participants of the round-table discussion proposed that only a few representatives of private households travel to the market to sell produce for all owners of private plots.

During the discussion it became clear that bringing order to the marketplace cannot be limited to the struggle against the lovers of the easy ruble. The creation of a surplus on the counters depends on the ease with which produce can arrive there from the private plot of the rural worker. In this matter help could be given by the services bureau which is obliged to accept agricultural products for sale from the population. The expansion of the network of kolkhoz and sovkhoz shops should serve to improve market trade.

The newspaper justifiably writes about the fact that the most important aspect of bringing order to the marketplace is the good work of state and cooperative trade. In recent years the republic has been significantly overfulfilling plans and obligations in the area of fruit and vegetable production. But therein lies a paradox. The largest specialized organization here, Azplodoovoshchprom [Azerbaijan fruit and vegetable industry association], is disrupting five-year plans for the delivery of vegetables and fruit to the local trade network.

VYSHKA frequently publishes articles on trade problems, particularly in kolkhoz markets. The editors ask penetrating questions which require an immediate response from the ministries of trade, both union and republic, from Azplodoovoshchprom, from the workers of consumers'cooperatives and from the workers of administrative organs and other organizations that have a direct or indirect involvement in this very important matter of supplying urban residents with vegetables and fruit.

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GROWING FURNITURE DEMAND NOT MET

Moscow KOMMERCHESKIY VESTNIK in Russian No 3, Mar 81 pp 30-31

[Article by V. Prokhina, senior staff scientist of VNIIKS [All-Union Scientific Research Institute of Consumer Demand and Market Conditions] and candidate of economic sciences: "Furniture: Supply and Demand"]

[Text] In 4 years of the current 5-year period the country produced 19.5 billion rubles worth of furniture, which is 1 billion rubles more than the volume of production over the entire Ninth Five-Year Plan. But the absolute increase in the scale of production occurred at lower rates than in previous years. The average annual growth rate of production over the years of the 10th Five-Year Plan which have passed has been at a level of 6.2 percent.

For sake of comparison we note that over all the years of the eighth and ninth 5-year plans (1966-1975) the production of these goods increased at an average annual rate of at least 8 percent. It follows that in spite of expansion of the volume of production, growth rates of furniture production are dropping. This trend is also typical of such regions of the country as RSFSR, Ukrainian SSR and Belorussian SSR, which have a share of more than 80 percent in the total volume of furniture production in the USSR.

As for the distribution of production, we cannot fail to note certain shifts in the expansion and renewal of the assortment of products and improvement of their service features. At the same time, no essential changes for the better have occurred in the assortment of furniture reaching the market. On the contrary, the growth rates of production have dropped for those types of furniture for which demand began to build comparatively recently and for which the market is still far from saturated. By and large this applies to multiple-unit furniture (modular furniture and furniture in sets and suites). For instance, the production of suites increased only 11.5 percent over 1976-1979, 3.4-fold in the years of the Eighth Five-Year Plan, and 1.9-fold in the 1971-1975 period.

Yet surveys of the public show that it is these items which most families now prefer, and indeed this trend will persist in coming years. For example, a sample survey of the population of Ukrainian SSR established that 70 percent of buyers of dining room furniture preferred to buy it in a set, and this is true of 83 percent of those buying furniture for bedrooms, 82 percent of those buying kitchen furniture, 65 percent of those buying furniture for a child's room, and 54 percent of

those buying furniture for a study. The buying of furniture in sets was favored by 54 percent of the families surveyed in Belorussian SSR and 66.4 percent of the families of Leningrad.

At the same time the volume of demand is still fairly great for separate pieces of furniture. A process has now begun whereby pieces acquired at the end of the sixties and beginning of the seventies are being replaced on a large scale. This applies first of all to upholstered furniture, since the service life of, say, armchairs, sofas, and chairbeds, under the influence of the factors of physical age and obsolescence, is considerably shorter than that of solid furniture. Moreover, first purchases of individual pieces (chairs, wooden bedsteads, wardrobes, etc.) still comprises a substantial share of the total volume of demand. This is related to rounding out sets of furniture which people already have and with family growth and with moving to new apartments, when people do not replace all their furniture.

On the basis of these requirements of the demand, the present product mix cannot be called perfect, since the rate of output of separate pieces is characterized by an appreciable decline. Whereas the production of wooden bedsteads increased 82.6 percent in the 1971-1975 period, in the 1976-1979 period it increased only 8.9 percent. The volume of production of chairs has remained stable at a level of 45 million per year since 1974. Over the first 4 years of the 10th Five-Year Plan no growth has been observed in the absolute volume of production of tables, chairbeds and armchairs. There has moreover been a drop in the production of cupboards for dishes, sideboards, sofas, couches and ottomans. For many years the share of kitchen and children's furniture in the total volume of production has remained unchanged (6 percent and 1.8 percent, respectively).

Of course, reduction of the production of old designs of buffets, sofas, couches and bureaus is fully justified, but the industry is not supplying sufficient amounts of models analogous to the old ones in their functional purpose.

The tendency of the growth rates of the output of certain products in value terms to exceed indicators in physical terms has recently become evident as a tendency in furniture production. For example, according to the data of a market survey in Ukrainian SSR production of dining room sets increased 2.1-fold in value terms in the 1976-1978 period, but 1.5-fold in physical terms; corresponding figures were 2.6- and 1.5-fold for children's furniture, 1.5- and 1.0-fold for recliners, and 1.2- and 1.1-fold for sofa beds. Production of sets of furniture for entrance halls and the production of chairbeds showed 4.2- and 1.1-fold growth in value terms, respectively, and 27.8- and 6.4-percent decline in physical terms.

Over that period the production of chairs in Belorussian SSR dropped 9 percent in physical terms, but increased 3 percent in value terms; production of sets and suites remained at the same level in numerical terms between 1976 and 1978, but in value terms increased nearly 30 percent.

We should note in this connection that the phenomenon of higher production of furniture in value terms (mainly thanks to higher prices) over physical output is not always accompanied by an improvement in the quality of the products and their service features. In a number of cases the rise in the price resulted either from a

high consumption of raw materials or the use of more expensive raw materials, but not in order to give the furniture additional strength or to improve its external appearance, but solely in order to augment the gross output of enterprises and to boost their production indicators. It is after all no secret that under the guise of putting new models into production certain factories are now replacing inexpensive products with more expensive "output boosters," though the quality of the product is not improved.

Cases are not uncommon in which sizable amounts of rejected furniture which does not meet state standards and technical specifications reaches the trade network, and given the shortage the customer is compelled to buy goods with obvious defects.

Solving the problem of the quality of furniture, of renewing the assortment and of increasing the production of items needed by the public is most directly dependent upon raising the level of the technical capability of the furniture industry and fully meeting the industry's need for raw materials, the necessary paints and varnishes and facing materials, upholstery fabrics and accessories. As in past years, an acute shortage of these materials is now being felt. For example, the furniture industry in Belorussian SSR in 1979 received approximately 50 percent of its need for peeled veneer, and the volume of output of accessories in the republic was below the 1976 level. The furniture industry of Ukrainian SSR received only 73 percent of its need for laminated paper plastics, 70 percent of the porolon for production of upholstered furniture, and 40 percent of the batting.

It follows that the problem of improving the quality and renewing the assortment of furniture has ceased now to be narrowly departmental, since its solution depends on the extent to which advanced achievements of science and technology are utilized not only in the production of furniture, but also in the chemical, textile, machine tool building and other industries related to it.

As in the past trade is given an important role in achieving the fullest satisfaction of of demand, since success in bringing the commodity from the producer to the consumer in accordance with his tastes and preferences depends precisely on how well informed trade personnel are concerning the character of development of the demand of the public for particular goods and on the condition of the material and technical base for selling the goods.

For many years furniture sales to the public have been determined by the volume and product mix of its production. In 1978 our country's public purchased more than 5 billion rubles worth of furniture, which is 17.3 percent more than in 1976. The average annual growth of sales in absolute terms has been more than 300 million rubles.

Furniture sales have been increasing at rates typical of the country as a whole in RSFSR, Ukrainian SSR and Belorussian SSR. The Baltic Republics and Moldavian SSR have higher rates. The highest growth rates of sales at the present time are observed in the republics of Central Asia. Whereas over the 1970-1978 period furniture sales increased 1.7-fold in the country as a whole, the increase was 1.9-fold in Uzbek SSR, more than twofold in Kazakh SSR and 2.4-fold in Tajik SSR.

At the same time the drop in the growth rates of the supply of furniture on the market has in recent years brought about a similar pattern in its sales. For instance, whereas in the years preceding the two 5-year periods average annual sales increased almost 8 percent, in the 1976-1979 period this figure was only 4.6 percent.

At the present time the orders of commercial organizations for furniture deliveries are being met at a level under 90 percent. In certain union republics, Ukrainian SSR for example, the orders of commercial organizations in recent years have not been altogether filled for any of the items in the assortment. The level at which orders have been filled was 26.6 percent for shoeracks, 29.1 percent for bureaus, 51.3 percent for cabinets used for bedding, and 55.1 percent for bookshelves. In Belorussian SSR the data of a public survey showed that in 1978 the satisfaction of demand was less than 60 percent for living room suites, 50 percent for dining room sets, 45 percent for bedroom suites, 46 percent for sets of kitchen furniture and 35 percent for bookshelves.

The reduction of deliveries has considerably worsened the situation in trade. For instance, according to reports of commercial correspondents of VNIIKS, a comparison of December 1979 with the same period of 1978 showed that of 26 furniture items on which observations are made the situation remained unchanged for only 15 and deteriorated for 9. For example, over that period the percentage of cities experiencing interruptions in the trade of particular goods increased from 9 to 28 percent for wardrobes, from 33 to 38 percent for bookshelves, from 14 to 22 percent for recliners, and from 68 to 74 percent for dining room suites.

At the present time every family has a set of furniture worth approximately 700 rubles, and according to research done by VNIIKS to determine optimum standards of consumption, in 1990 the average family should have furniture worth 2,351 rubles, or 3.3-fold more than now.

The demand to replace worn-out and obsolescent pieces of furniture will increase at faster rates. Assuming the optimum product mix, in 1990 the average family should acquire 144 rubles worth of furniture solely for replacement, that is, 2.1-fold more than the value of all furniture sales per family. Industry and trade should orient all their capabilities and unused potential, then, toward attaining optimum levels of consumption of furniture.

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PERSONAL INCOME AND SAVINGS

GATHERING OF STATISTICS ON FAMILY BUDGETS DESCRIBED

Tbilisi KOMUNISTI in Georgian 11 Feb 81 p 3

[Article by GSSR Central Statistical Administration Deputy Chief Ts. Eliadze under rubric "The Language of Statistics": "The Family Budget"]

> [Text] The task of the 11th Five-Year Plan is to further improve the well-being of the Soviet people on the basis of firm, steady development of the national economy (from the CPSU CC draft).

Raising the people's standard of living, a concern for the Soviet family and its budget, has always been at the center of the party's and government's attention. It is a vital component of the strategy for the building of communism in our country.

In a socialist society, production is developed for the purpose of ever more fully meeting material and spiritual needs. The resolution of this vital social task derives from the laws governing social development characteristic of the socialist system, above all the requirements of the fundamental economic law of that society.

In a socialist society, all production is designed for man, to meet man's material and cultural needs. Proof of this is the big new step that was taken on the path toward resolving social tasks during the 10th Five-Year Plan: 19.2 percent more funds were taken from the republic's national income to improve the people's standard of living than during the 9th Five-Year Plan; real per capita income rose by 25.3 percent; average wages to workers and employees rose by 19 percent or more; and kolkhozniks' income from social farming rose by 30.4 percent.

With regard to improving the people's standard of living, one of the biggest social problems is housing. During the past five-year plan, 8.325 million square meters of housing were built and 681,000 persons received better housing conditions.

Along with increased material prosperity, all forms of schooling are also being developed; the population's level of education is rising accordingly. According to data of the 1979 all-union census, 856 out of every 1,000 persons employed had a higher or secondary (complete or incomplete) education. The same kind of improvement characterizes the working people's health services. The network of sanatoria and treatment and preventive facilities is growing, the death rate is declining, and average life spans are longer. Science and culture are developing, the network of cultural and educational institutions is expanding. Essential differences between intellectual and physical labor and between the city and the countryside are gradually disappearing. Working and living conditions are improving.

In investigating the tendencies and laws governing changes in the level of material well-being of the whole population and individual social groups, central importance attaches to statistical data reflecting the population's standard of living, in particular one of its component elements--budget research statistics.

Standard of living statistics are based on state accounting materials, encompassing broad direct information on the whole population and characterizing the working people's material well-being nationwide or in individual regions. Budget statistics for the population, moreover, are based on selective research data which deepen and augment this information and constitute a source of differentiated statistical data reflecting the distribution of personal consumption, income, and outgo in various social groups. The completeness and accuracy of information from both these sources largely determine the accuracy of economic calculations used in the planning of improvement of the people's well-being. At the present stage, accordingly, special attention is being focused on improving the underlying basis of the information, on thorough processing and more effective analysis of the statistical data, especially budget research materials.

The family budget consists of the actual level of income and outgo in a given period of time; it reflects the process of distribution and redistribution of the country's national income with regard to that portion which comes to be at the disposal of the population for purposes of meeting personal needs.

Family budget statistics studies the specific level of a family's income, outgo, and consumption in relation to a number of social-economic factors; it characterizes the rate of change in those levels, structural shifts in consumption, and the role of various sources which go to make up the family income. Statistical data enable us to analyze the effect of various measures on the standard of living of different groups with respect to wages, pension security, and cultural and consumer services. The analysis of budget data reveals important tendencies and laws governing changes in material prosperity and the use of various services in relation to family income sources and levels, family composition, employment, and a number of other factors; these are utilized in drawing up planned targets affecting the people's well-being.

Family budget statistics also provide important raw data for economic calculations such as computation of the country's national income and its distribution to the population according to social group, also the computation of real income and the drawing up of balances of the population's cash income and outgo, labor resources, agricultural products, and so on. Budget research materials, which characterize consumption in relation to average per capita income levels and income sources, the sex and age composition of the family members, the natural and climatic conditions of life in a given region of the country, and other factors, are utilized in dealing with one of the most vital matters of economic administration and planning--forecasting the volume and structure of the effective demand [platezhesposobnyy spros] of various social groups in the population. Family budget statistics make it possible to resolve the matter of working out and implementing the food program which, as CPSU CC General Secretary and USSR Supreme Soviet Presidium Chairman L. I. Brezhnev noted at the October 1980 CPSU CC Plenum, stands in first place among those matters which determine the standard of living of the Soviet people.

Research on family budget statistics goes back a long way. It started in this country with the first investigation of the peasant economy carried out in the 1870s.

Since the Great October Socialist Revolution, family budget statistics have provided fundamental information concerning the standard of living of the country's people. Research on the family budgets of workers and employees began in 1918, and on the peasant economy in 1919.

In our republic, family budget research began in 1925-1926. Now 1,425 families are taking part in this research. Budget investigation takes place on a voluntary basis--that is, with the consent of the family being studied. It is conducted by a special worker of the republic's Central Statistical Administration, a statistician specializing in the family budgets of workers, employees, and kolkhozniks.

The family being studied is supposed to keep an accurate record of its income and outgo, making the appropriate entries every day. It is vitally important that they understand that the accuracy and completeness of every figure recorded in the study determine how accurately the data reflect the standard of living of our whole population by individual social groups and that the material summarized on the basis of these data goes into determining how to further enhance the material and cultural well-being of our country's whole population. Every recorded entry in the budget survey is used only to obtain overall figures, and full confidentiality is assured each individual.

Many of the families in the republic's budget survey network have a long history. Among our survey families we have such "old hands" as N. Datuashvili, who works in the Clothing Factory imeni Ordzhonikidze. His family has been taking part in the survey since 1936. Another is T. Pimnistaveli's family--since 1938. Still others are Worsted Fabric Combine workers T. Kobakhidze (since 1983), T. Benidze (1945), K. Zazashvili (1942), T. Saakadze (1948), and T. Loshakova-Sikharulidze (1954). There is Clothing Factory imeni Pervoye Maya Production Training Department instructor K. Oganiani (1952), Isani Footwear Factory Planning Department Chief N. Dudkina (1953), and fashion designer A. Kuznetsova (1952). Also Tbilisi Polyclinic No 17 nurse L. Kilkinova (1952).

There are a lot of long-time budget survey families among the kolkhozniks. They include V. Berdzenishvili's family of Kheltubani in Gori Rayon (since 1952), S. Zakaridze's family of Sochkheti in Tkibuli Rayon (1952), G. Sikharulidze of Rukistsikhe in Chokhatauri Rayon (1952), S. Mzhavia of Konchkati in Makharadze (1952), and many others who are doing an honest job of carrying out this vital civic duty.

A total of 57 senior statisticians are involved in the republic's budget survey. Each one is in charge of 25 families. The statistician has the duty of visiting each family assigned to him at least twice a month, helping them keep accurate and complete records and figuring remainders of goods and cash funds. Good relations are established between the statistician and the survey family from the very start. A good statistician (and we have many good ones) is always a welcome guest, sharing the survey family's joys and sorrows, a man of trust, a confidant of every family member. Survey families always welcome the state statistical representative and willingly give him all information concerning the family budget. Our deepest thanks to all survey families for their cooperation in this vital matter!

Many other social problems can be studied via the budget survey network. A one-time survey (family opinion study) of the performance of consumer service enterprises was conducted in 1980, for example, and a study of the time budget of workers, employees,

and kolkhozniks. Much interesting material was obtained from a recent survey designed primarily to find reserves for increasing the amount of free time which the people use to enhance their education, cuture, and technical level and satisfy other social needs. The survey showed that the main source for increasing the amount of free time is to reduce the large amount of time the people have to spend in the stores and shops buying goods and obtaining services as well as the time spent getting to and from work via public transport.

The budget survey data are of great importance to the national economy. The family budget represents a very important source of data concerning the whole population's differentiation with regard to the influence of various social-economic factors on the standard of living and how it is formed. This kind of information, analyzed in accordance with social groups and family types, is utilized in working out and substantiating various measures for the benefit of all segments of the population.

Methods of studying the people's standard of living via budget surveys and analysis of economic and statistical data are being perfected and refined continually. In investigating the standard of living at the present time, great practical importance attaches to the use of mathematical methods of information processing and analysis by means of electronic computers; this already constitutes one of the functioning subsystems in the automated system of state statistics.

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